Citizen Science

The Value of Collaboration

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Perspectives on Citizen Science

For scientists:

► Build Education and Awareness in participants (advocates for science?)

► Gain an inexpensive source of labor

► Obtain a larger pool of observers

For citizens:

► Derive greater value from an avocation

► Expand personal knowledge/become amateur scientists

► Create or become informed advocates

Begin with a Simple Definition

Citizen Science is the collection of scientific data by individuals who are not professional scientists.

Examples of Citizen Science

Over 700 projects worldwide
- Universities
- National, State, and local governments
- Research Institutes
- Scientific societies
- Conservation organizations

Engage bird watchers, gardeners, hikers, hunters, amateur astronomers, rock hounds, farmers, forest landowners, corporate clubs

Notable Examples

Cornell Laboratory
Of Ornithology, Audubon,
British Trust for Birds
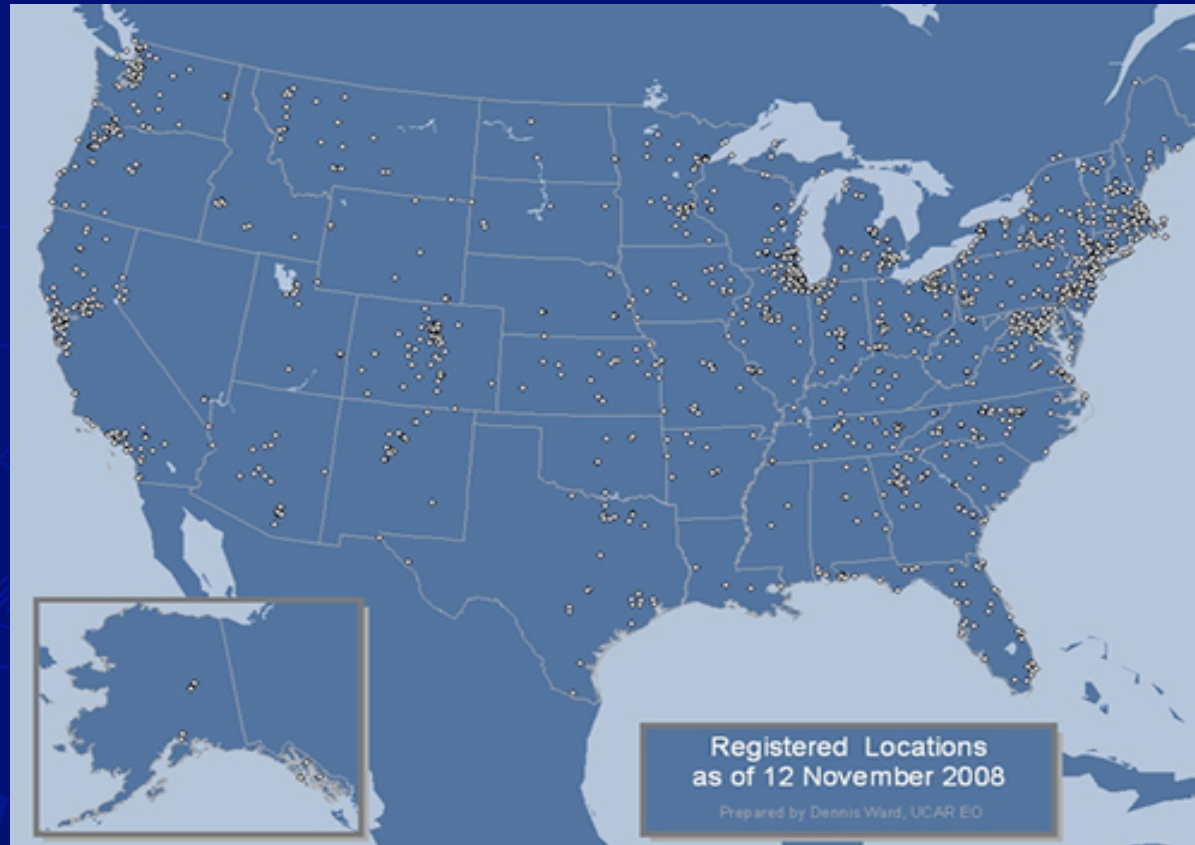

Monarch Project

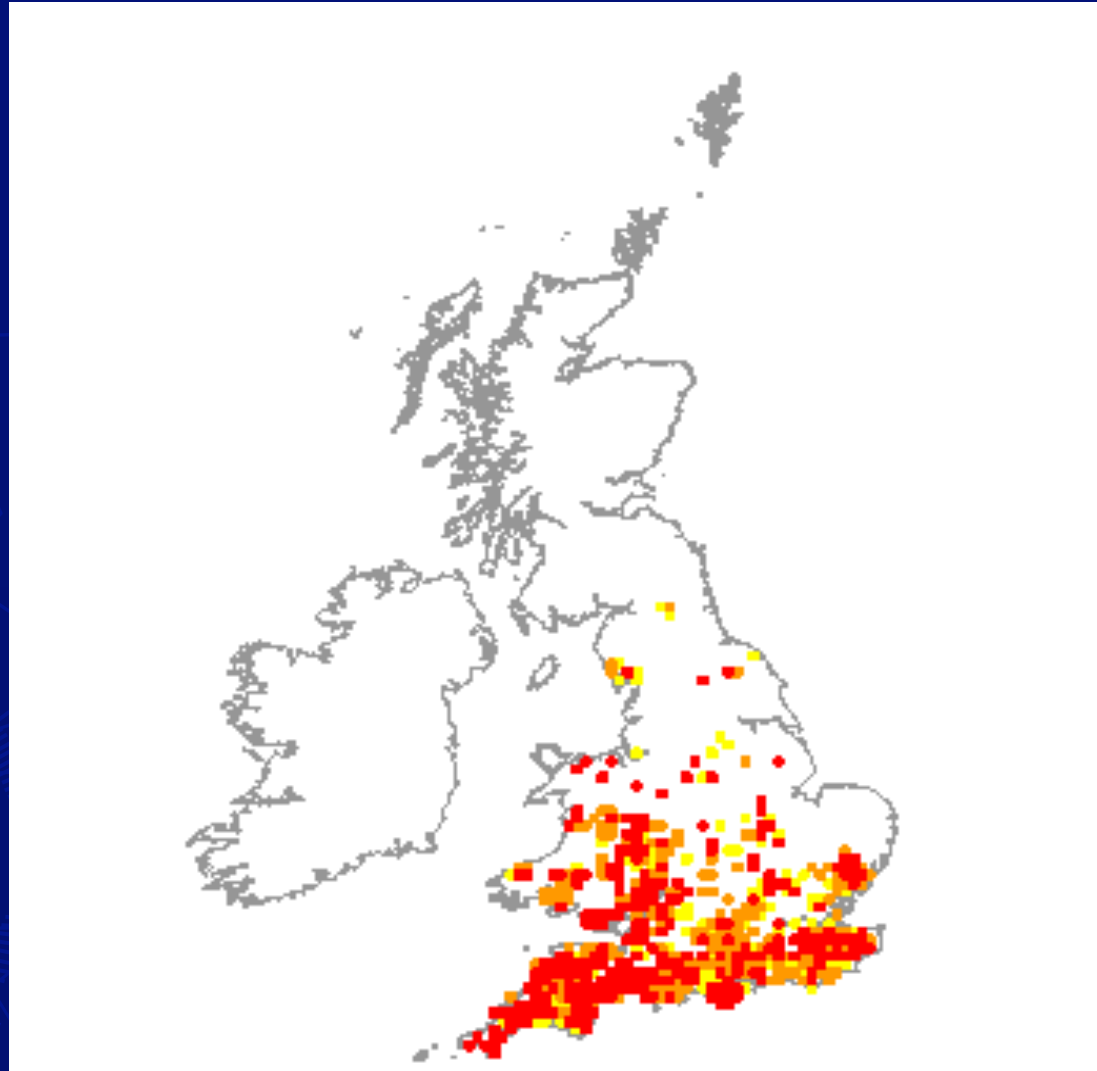Project Budburst

Audubon Christmas Bird Counts

Monarch Butterfly Observation Points in Eastern US

Registered Locations
as of 12 November 2008
Prepared by Dennis Ward, UCAR EO

Project Budburst's Observation locations

Dormouse survey

British National Biodiversity Network

Reluctance Lingers

► Awareness?

► Participant reliability
- Availability and turnover
- Dedication to project, methods, and protocols
- Levels of knowledge and effort

► Data quality

► Significant investment of time and effort to gain confidence

Newcombe Forest Surveys

A Future for Citizen Science?

I. Broad-scale collaborations where many observers are required to detect patterns

Biodiversity

Phenology

Migratory behavior

Climate change

II. Collaborations with agencies for local land and water management

Thank You

What makes a citizen/science collaboration successful?

► Civic-minded scientists

- A willingness to engage with citizens
- A willingness to share knowledge
- Respect for the knowledge, dedication and curiosity citizens can bring
- Trust
- Patience

More on Success

► Science-minded citizens

- Curious about the natural world
- Amateur naturalists already
  - ► Bird watchers
  - ► Rock hounds
  - ► Gardeners
- Willingness to gather and share knowledge

► Patience

Practical Considerations for Success

► Recruiting: understand the project need

► Explain the project thoroughly

► Provide clear expectations

► Provide adequate training and tools

► Support and communication throughout the project

► Follow up with participants

- Use the data or explain why
- Close out the project with participants

We can all be in this together